

Colonization. By Rev. O. B. Frothingham.

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ANTI-SLAVERY TRACTS. No. 3. COLONIZATION.

BY REV. O. B. FROTHINGHAM.

1. The Colonization Society propose transporting to Africa the whole free colored population of the United States, with or without their consent. Said Mr. Webster, "If Virginia or the south see fit to make any proposition to *relieve* themselves from the *burden* of their free colored population, they have my free consent that the government shall pay them out of these proceeds (two hundred million dollars) any sum of money adequate to that end." Said Mr. Stanton, of the "ebony line" of steamers, "Have we not *driven away* the red man? Who shall say nay when we say to the black man, *You are not wanted?*" Mr. Brodnax, of Virginia, avowed himself in favor of compulsory laws to force the blacks into exile, and would extort their "consent" by a species of oppression calculated to make their situation here insupportable. He even confesses that some are induced to emigrate "by the gentle admonition of a severe flagellation." It is a fact, that out of eight thousand five hundred persons sent by this society to Liberia, up to the year 1853, four thousand and ninety-three were emancipated *in view of emigrating*. Of course these had no choice about going.

II. The object of this wholesale banishment of the free blacks is the *security of the slave system*. Proofs of this abound. We have room for a few only.

1. The idea of removing the free blacks of the south, by colonizing them in remote Africa, originated in 1777. But the first vigorous impulse towards it was given, in 1800, by a threatened insurrection in Virginia; in consequence of which the governor was "requested to correspond with the President of the United States on the subject of purchasing lands without the limits of this State, whither persons *obnoxious to the laws, or dangerous to the peace* 1 2 *of society, may be removed.*" This was the beginning—a dread of the *disturbing* presence of the free blacks—a dread on the part of *slaveholders*, anxious to secure their property.

2. The society was founded and supported by slaveholders. It had its birth in Virginia. At its formation Mr. Clay presided and John Randolph spoke. Its first president was Judge Washington, of Virginia. Its seventeen vice presidents were all from the south. Its managers were owners of slaves. The substitution, in later years, of northern men with southern principles for southern men has not affected this peculiarity a whit. Its organs declare that "slaveholders have given the society their approval; that they will approve it, and can approve no other;" of course because it maintains slavery.

3. The society has never manifested hostility to the institution of slavery. This would seem to follow from the nature of the case. But here are evidences: John Randolph, at the meeting called, in 1816, "to consider the propriety and practicability of colonizing the free people of color in the United States, and of forming a society for that purpose," declared publicly that the meeting, in its effects, "must materially tend to *secure the property of every master in the United States over his slaves*. And again, in another speech: "The measure proposed will prove one of the *greatest securities* to enable the master to keep in possession *his own property*. " To the same purport hear Henry Clay: "It is not proposed to consider any question of emancipation, or that is *connected* with the abolition of slavery. I am myself a *slaveholder*, and consider that species of property as *inviolable* as any other in the country." The society "has always protested," say some memorialists, (12th Ann. Rep.,) "that it has no wish to *interfere* with the delicate, but important, question of slavery." "Its object, if I understand it aright," said Mr. Archer, of Virginia, "involves no *intrusion* upon property, or *even upon prejudice*. " "It is necessary," contends Hermannus Bleeker, "to disclaim all attempts for the immediate abolition of slavery, or the *instruction of the great body of the blacks*. " Rev. J. M. Pease announces that "in *no sense whatever* does the *genius* of this institution interfere with the legal relation of master and servant. It acknowledges the constitutionality of that relation, and the *providential arrangement* by which it subsists." The editor of the New York Colonization Society's Journal, (March, 1853,) informs his readers that the Colonization Society was formed to assist free colored people, *and only such*, and *from its beginning disclaimed*, as a society, all interference with the question of slavery. Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, in 1839, called on the Colonization society "to maintain that great *original principle on which it was founded—friendship to the slaveholders*. " More than this, the society is often recommended as the safeguard and defence of slavery. Thus in the African Repository, vol. i p. 67, we read: "The object of the Colonization Society commends itself to every class. *The landed proprietor may enhance the value of his property* by assisting the enterprise," and " *may contribute more effectually to the continuance and strength of this system*, by removing those now free, than by any or all other methods which can possibly be devised." Again: Mr. Archer speaks: "It is on the ground of *interest*, therefore, the most indisputable *pecuniary* interest, that I address myself to the people and legislatures of the slaveholding States." Hon. T. Butler King, writing to F. P. Stanton about his "ebony line," says, "The slaves *cannot* be removed; but the free colored people can be, and the *security* of both master and servant promoted." Thus do the slaveholding colonizationists describe their favorite institution: "Its objects are, in the *first place*, to *aid ourselves* by relieving us from a species of population pregnant with future danger and present inconvenience." In the African Repository, vol. xii. p. 375, it is maintained "that the rights of the master or owner of slave property are acknowledged by the divine law." And this is good colonization doctrine, often uttered by the most eminent champions of the society.

4. The Colonization Society does not encourage emancipation. "The managers could with no propriety depart from their original and avowed purpose, and *make emancipation their object*. And they would further say, that, *if they were not thus restrained* by the terms of their association, they would still consider any attempts to promote the increase of the free colored population by manumission unnecessary, premature, and dangerous." "The rights of the masters are to remain sacred in the eyes of the society." (African Repos. vol. xi. p. 58, and iv. 274.) "It would be as humane *to throw them from the decks in the middle passage* as to set them free in our country. We believe there is not the *slightest moral turpitude* in holding slaves 4 under existing circumstances at the south." (African Repos. vol. ix. p. 4.) And Mr. Hopkins, president of the Geneva (New York) Colonization Society, goes further: "As I understand the Epistle to Timothy," he says, "there is an express injunction *not to preach manumission*." Distinguished patrons of this scheme have not been forward in emancipating their slaves. Judge Washington, the first president of the society, in 1821 undeceived his sanguine serfs by assuring them that none of them need expect freedom, and soon after sold fifty-four to the New Orleans market. Its second president, Mr. Carroll, held through life, and bequeathed at his death, one thousand slaves. Mr. Madison, another president, left a hundred slaves to his heirs, sending *none* to Liberia. Mr. Clay directed that his slaves should be kept in bonds twenty-five years after his death, and then should be removed to Liberia. Colonization operates, not to accelerate emancipation, but to retard it. That it must have this effect is plain, because the removal of the free blacks enhances the value of slave property, and manumission causes the market price of the non-manumitted to rise. It is doubtful if the rate of emancipation has ever to any considerable extent been influenced by this scheme. It has depended upon the cotton crop. Statistics show that when the cotton crop, between 1800 and 1820, increased nearly threefold, the number of emancipations decreased nearly two thirds. Emancipations multiplied between 1820 and 1830, the value of the cotton crop remaining nearly stationary. In 1830–1840 they dwindled away more than one half, owing to the more than double value of the cotton crop; and in 1840–1850 they diminished almost to nothing, from a similar cause. All this proves that colonization does not encourage emancipation. It is perfectly willing to leave slavery where and what it is, and only aims to remove the *already* free people, whose presence menaces its safety.

5. The Colonization Society *wages war* upon the free blacks. It calls them "notoriously ignorant, degraded, and miserable, mentally diseased, broken spirited; acted upon by no motives to honorable exertion; scarcely reached in their debasement by the heavenly light;" an incubus, a nuisance; "more addicted to crime, and vice, and dissolute manners than any other portion of the people of the United States." And not in pity is this said of them, but in hate, and with the design of awakening against them more hate. What 5 kind of love is it that thus vilifies its objects? What kind of love is it that strives to deepen degradation; that views with "highest gratification" the barbarous edicts of southern legislatures, by which free colored people entering the State (Maryland) must

pay twenty dollars, on conviction, for the first offence, and five hundred dollars for the second offence, or be sold to satisfy the demand;^{*} are forbidden to attend religious meetings, save when conducted by whites;[†] and may not sell any of the most common articles of traffic among whites, nine in number, without proving by certificate that they came honestly by them? Do they who despise and persecute the blacks here really wish them well any where, even in Liberia? To think so is absurd. Men do not scorn and revile those they love. The free blacks are objects of antipathy; and in banishing them, the slaveholders wish only to protect *themselves*.

* One half the net proceeds of sale goes to the State Colonization Society!

† In Baltimore and Annapolis it is only necessary that the meeting should be held "with the written permission of a white licensed ordained preacher."

6. Finally, the enemies of slavery, with almost unanimous consent, are hostile to the Colonization Society. Repeatedly have the free people of color exposed and protested against it, as in direct opposition to their best hopes, prospects, and rights. As early as 1817, *ere an anti-slavery society was formed*, it was denounced in Virginia, and by public resolves, as *cruel*, and "in direct violation of those principles which have been the boast of the republic." And in 1853 the colored people of Syracuse held a meeting, and unanimously resolved, "That our *abhorrence* of the scheme of African colonization is *not in the slightest degree abated*; that we recognize in it the most *intense hatred* of the colored race, clad in the garb of *pretended* philanthropy." The same estimate of its character was formed and promulgated by such men as Wilberforce, Macaulay, Gurney, Lushington, Buxton, Cropper, and O'Connell. And Thomas Clarkson, in a letter to Mr. Garrison, giving his reasons for first accepting, and afterwards rejecting, the plan, says, "I will only say that I saw the scheme—shall I say the *diabolical* scheme?—with new eyes, and that the new light thrown upon it determined me to wash my hands clean forever of the undertaking." Who are the truest friends of the slave—such persons as these? or the Clays, Stantons, Wises, and Archers, who favor colonization? 1*

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We think now we have fairly proved our propositions, that the Colonization Society aims to expatriate the free blacks of the United States, and that in doing this it has in view the security of slavery. Many more evidences might be produced; but let candid men ponder these. Let them consider, moreover, how much respect is fairly due to a society whose agents say one thing at the north, and another at the south; commend slavery in Georgia, and condemn it in Massachusetts; profess themselves the friends of the negro on one side of the line, and the friends of the negro's oppressor on the other side; and use unsuspecting anti-slavery feeling to advance the ends of crafty pro-slavery principles. Let them estimate the feasibility of a scheme so slow that in thirty-six years it

transported to Liberia only about two thirds of the annual increase of the free black population, and not one sixth of the annual increase of those in bondage, and so costly that Mr. Webster's famous bid of two hundred million dollars would pay not quite one third of the expense of carrying it out. Let them ask what kind of civilization is likely to be diffused in Africa by slaves, and how it is possible that a free, enlightened Christian republic can be established by people who are "notoriously ignorant, degraded, and miserable; more addicted to crime, and vice, and dissolute manners than any other portion of the United States." Let them weigh well these facts and reasonings; and if they hear from colonizationists, as they will, sentiments verbally at variance with the propositions maintained above, let them regard such as illustrations of the duplicity, the sublime hypocrisy and treachery, which are not the least remarkable among the peculiarities of this remarkable society.

PROTEST. (1833.)

We the undersigned, observing with regret that the American Colonization Society appears to be gaining some adherents in this country, are desirous to express our opinions respecting it.

Our motive and excuse for thus coming forward are the claims which the society has put forth to anti-slavery support. These claims are, in our opinion, wholly groundless; and we feel bound to affirm that our deliberate judgment and conviction are, that the professions made by the Colonization Society, of promoting the abolition of slavery, are altogether delusive.

As far as the mere colony of Liberia is concerned, it has, no doubt, the advantages of other trading establishments. In this sense it is beneficial both to Africa and America, and we cordially wish it well. We cannot, however, refrain from expressing our strong opinion that it is a settlement of which the United States ought to bear the whole cost. We never required of that country to assist us in Sierra Leone. We are enormously burdened by our own connection with slavery; and we do maintain that we ought not to be called on to contribute to the expenses of a colony which, though no doubt comprising some advantages, was formed chiefly to indulge the prejudices of American slaveholders, and which is regarded with aversion by the colored population of the United States.

With regard to the extinction of the slave trade, we apprehend that Liberia, however good the intentions of its supporters, will do little or nothing towards it except on the extent of its own territory. The only effectual deathblow to the accursed traffic will be a destruction of slavery throughout the world. To the destruction of slavery throughout the world, we are compelled to say that we believe the Colonization Society *to be an obstruction*.

Our objections to it are, therefore, briefly these: While we believe its pretexts to be delusive, we are convinced that its *real* effects are of the most dangerous nature. It takes its root from a cruel

prejudice and alienation in the whites of America against the colored people, slave or free. This being its source, the effects are what might be expected; that it fosters and increases the spirit of caste, already so unhappily predominant; that it widens the breach between the two races; exposes the colored people to great practical persecution, in order to *force* them to emigrate; and, finally, is calculated to swallow up and divert that feeling which America, as a Christian and a free country, cannot but entertain, that slavery is alike incompatible with the law of God and with the well being of man, whether the enslaved or the enslaver.

On these grounds, therefore, and while we acknowledge the colony of Liberia, or any other colony on the coast of Africa, to be *in itself* a good thing, we must be understood utterly to repudiate the principles of the American Colonization Society. That society is, in our estimation, not deserving the countenance of the British public.

Wm. Wilberforce,

Wm. Smith,

Zachary Macaulay,

Wm. Evans, M. P.,

Samuel Gurney,

George Stephen,

Suffield,

S. Lushington, M. P.,

Thos. Fowell Buxton,

James Cropper,

William Allen,

Daniel O'Connell, M. P.

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TESTIMONY OF THOMAS CLARKSON.

This lamented British philanthropist, in a letter addressed to William Lloyd Garrison in 1840, explaining in what manner he became deceived in regard to the real character and designs of the American Colonization Society, says,—

“You will see in this narrative my reasons for patronizing at first the American Colonization Society, and my reasons, also, for having afterwards deserted it. I left it, first, because it was *entirely impracticable*. This is a *sufficient reason* of itself; for no man in his senses would pursue a plan which he thought could never be accomplished. I left it, secondly, because I thought that *newly-emancipated* slaves were not qualified to become colonists in Africa to any good purpose. How could persons be sent with any propriety to *civilize others* who *wanted civilizing themselves*? Besides, the advocates for the Colonization Society in America had no right to send *the scum of their population* to Africa, to breed a moral pestilence there. * * * If the society did not take these people, then the prospectus offered to the public had no meaning in it, and slavery could never, according to its promises, be *extinguished* in the United States.”

Referring to the speeches made by the friends of the Colonization Society in different states of the Union, he adds,—

“It appeared from these speeches that the most violent supporters of this society *were planters themselves*, and that the speakers did not hesitate to hold out the monstrous and hateful proposition, that the negroes were *not men and women*, but that they belonged to the *brute creation*. It was impossible to read these speeches, which were so many public documents, and not perceive that the persons then assembled were no friends, but bitter enemies, to the whole African race, and that *nothing in the way of good intentions* towards the negro could be expected from them. it is unnecessary for me to attempt to describe what my feelings were upon this occasion. I will only say that I saw the scheme—shall I say the diabolical scheme?—with new eyes, and that the new light thus thrown upon it, added to the two arguments before mentioned, determined me to wash my hands clean forever of the undertaking. * * *

“I have now given you my reasons for having once patronized the Colonization Society and then deserted it, and hope you will consider them satisfactory. I am, dear sir, with great esteem,

Very truly and cordially yours, THOMAS CLARKSON.”

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